

Sept 2023

PC MONITOR

Durham Personal Computer Users' Club Newsletter



DPCUC General Meeting

Our Club meets monthly on the second Thursday of each month.
All meetings are currently held using Zoom.

We hope some day in the future to be able to meet in person again.

Please visit the Club Web Page for all the latest links and information
<http://www.durhampc-usersclub.on.ca/>

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Next Meeting

A Guide to Windows 11

by **Bill James**

On ZOOM – **Thursday, Sept 14 2023, 7:00PM**

FYI

- By Dan Delong

Samsung, Motorola, and Oppo to make rollable, flex, phone screens

These thin, flexible OLED screens will extend and contract like a rolling window blind, starting with some small-sized devices, and reaching up to a 17 inch screen, diagonally (expanded from a 13-inch screen).

<https://www.gadgets360.com/mobiles/news/samsung-rollable-flex-production-2025-leak-bezel-less-smartphone-expected-4329813>

Dockcase – an advanced laptop hub

Newer computers (and phones) lack both, modern and legacy ports. **Dockcase** includes almost every imaginable port, from those used by common storage devices, to a LAN port, to display ports, to charging ports, along with a small view screen that displays activity for each of these 10 ports. Transfer rate is over 300 MB/s... not including the GB Ethernet port. Supported operating systems are: - Windows 7 and up, macOS 10.4 and up, iPad 12.4 and up, and both Linux and Android. The retail price is \$160 USD for the latest **Dockcase10-in-1 Explorer Edition**. Amazon Canada sells older models for less.



https://www.dockcase.com/products/dockcase-smart-hub-explorer-edition_10_in_1

UN's Digital Army

The Internet is supposed to be neutral – an open and free area for contributors to ‘opinionate’ and spread ‘factual’ knowledge. Here’s the problem... too much ‘information’ is uninformative and malicious. The ‘**misinformers**’ are often state agencies, trying to alter the collective conscience of whole nations. This can include both democratic and authoritarian governments. Preventing this propaganda requires training a whole army of ‘**spotters**’, who will post the true facts, wherever the lies are found. Call it “**Troll versus Troll**” or “**Spy versus Spy**” (like the MAD magazine cartoon, but without the humour). You too, can enrol in this Peace Keeping Army.



<https://reclaimthenet.org/the-un-is-building-a-digital-army>

RSChrono – wrist watches for car buffs

Other than quality waterproof construction, what does this watch have going for it? The face of the watch, despite having no numbers, has a face with a cast alloy wheel appearance, in twelve segments. Behind the see-through crystal is a miniature racing disk brake and brake pads. (*Choose from many wheel and brake styles... wheels rotate in the gyro model.*) Watches seem to be more popular, lately... perhaps because cell phones need to be retrieved from a pocket or purse, whereas a wrist watch is only a split second away.



<https://www.rschrono.com/>

AI like ChatGPT and Bard – protections overcome

Appending AI prompts with a certain string of ASCII characters will override protections meant to stop Chatbots from being malevolent; that is, from supplying answers that could, possibly, abet crimes or cause serious harm. Examples of harm might be; - identity theft, various methods for computer attacks, and even how to assemble bio-weapons; - all this, in addition to existing problems with bias and wrong, or confusing, answers to ChatGPT queries.

<https://www.wired.com/story/ai-adversarial-attacks/>

Juvenile Hackers leak Grand Theft Auto

Despite court efforts to minimize damage from known hackers in the UK, one clever lad – already housed in a Travelodge hotel for safe keeping—still managed to upload video clips of this unreleased computer game, using only a Fire Stick, his smart phone, a mouse and a keyboard. Despite his many other charges—for previous hacking adventures—his youth and autism seems to have kept him out of jail, for now.

<https://techviral.net/gta-vi-hacker-used-amazon-fire-tv-stick-to-leak-footage/>

Blink Cameras – sale time

For anyone in the market for security cameras and doorbells by Blink, I hope this sale is still on, by the time this DPCUC newsletter comes out. The accompanying image shows a couple of current deals from Best Buy Canada. The wire-free camera (*right*) is half priced, and can also be purchased in three-pack and five-pack configurations (for a 50% lower price than normal).

<https://www.bestbuy.ca/en-ca/search?search=Blink>



Immortals of Aveum – a shooter game without guns [opinion]

As a ‘non-gamer’, why might I check out an article about gaming? Well, I’m aware of the addictive hold gaming has on youthful minds, and its possible harm to rational thinking, resulting in so much time absorbed in an unreal world of fantasy. **Aveum** is not the first fantasy world to take hold of young minds. In the recent past, consider the strong hold comics and science fiction short stories had on a previous generation. Such mental exploits are not inherently bad for kids, unless they interfere with social development, friendships, family, eating, and sleeping. Also, serious gaming requires lots of money for hardware and fast broadband, not to mention the subscription fees for the game itself. However, “**Immortals of Aveum**” modifies the highly weaponized military shooter fantasy into the realm of **magic**, replacing guns with “**spells**” (kind’a’ like Harry Potter adventures). When released, **Immortals of Aveum** may, or may not, cause the harms mentioned. The developer aims to include lessons about human nature (which may be a good thing) although real war, as witnessed in Ukraine, is nothing like these fantasy games.



<https://www.wired.com/story/immortals-of-aveum-review-magic-shooter/>

Dell P-Series 24-inch Touch USB-C and Hub Monitor

First thought... Why does this monitor have an Ethernet port? [Mention of this port is accompanied by the term “Wake-up-on-LAN”. Hence this may be the reason for including the RJ45 port.] Video input still arrives via USB-C and/or HDMI. Ten-point finger touch is included for this full HD screen (1080x1920 16:9). Audio arrives through a 3W, top-firing, speaker. Dell’s display manager can split the screen into up to six areas, each with its own window (*see image*). Orientations are:- height, swivel, and tilt, such that the bottom soft edge of this monitor can reach desk level and be tilted on an extreme angle, like an architect’s table. The price is just under \$400 CAD, before sales tax and environmental tax.

<https://www.dell.com/en-ca/shop/dell-24-touchscreen-monitor-p2424ht/apd/210-bhsf/monitors-monitor-accessories>

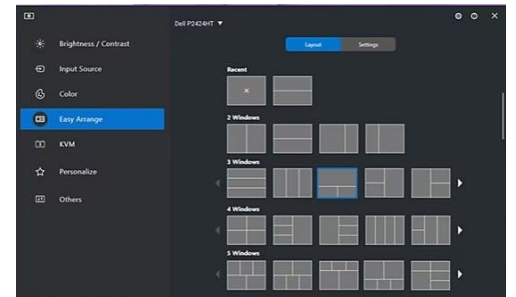


Figure 1: Dell Display Manager windows patterns.

LG StandbyME Go Portable 27-inch Monitor in a briefcase



Now, for a battery powered, portable, touch screen that is well protected inside a briefcase, and with 20W speakers.. Although an HDMI port is for connecting to a computer, Wi-Fi input works just as well. Both the on-a-stand model (*mentioned in a previous newsletter*) and the in-a-briefcase model are on pre-order. Both will soon be available for about one thousand USD. Battery power should be good for 3 hours.

<https://www.lg.com/us/tvs/lg-27lx5qkna>

Samsung Food AI

Deluxe refrigerators, sold by [Samsung](#), have included the **Family Hub** touch screen interface, useful for sharing notes, music, recipes, and for smart phone integration. The next advancement may add AI to the mix, such that cooking advice becomes even more precise. **Food AI** will learn your cooking skill level and any time constraints you may be under, and recommend recipes based on available ingredients (and your family favourites). Two way voice communication, via **Bixby** and AI prompts, will keep your hands free for kitchen tasks and phone calls.

<https://www.sammobile.com/news/samsung-food-platform-unveil-ifa-2023/>

WordPress 100 Year Plan

WordPress sites are free (for a basic site). Fees enter the picture when needing to pay for hosting, and for many of the themes and plug-in/add-ons. Despite my trepidation about the security and longevity of this platform, WordPress has become pretty universal for content management on the Web. WP started out as a simple blogger, and grew quickly in its features set, becoming dominant throughout the Web. As with many popular creative endeavours, WordPress wishes to make more money. A subscription service, or a one-time fee would make this possible. The WordPress 100 Year Plan, is one of those two options. The 100-Year Plan is aimed at those wanting a guarantee that their content will last a long, long, time. Family history creators will be among those interested in such a plan. The CEO of WordPress suggests giving newborns a forever home on the Web. At current prices, and hosted by WordPress, this would amount to about \$25-\$33 CAD per month on the annual plan, for one domain name. *[This 100 Year Plan should be far less costly, since storage and server performance continues to be less costly, as years go by. I did not do the math, comparing it to the 100-year plan.]* However, WordPress also offers a free 1GB storage plan, with no expiration. *[This appears adequate for most users to hold a significant amount of text and images, for a long, long, time.]* But, wait! I just found the 100-years price! Here it is, and it is not for the financially challenged.

The 100-Year Plan ensures that your stories, achievements, and memories are preserved for generations to come. One payment. One hundred years of legacy. US\$38,000.

<https://wordpress.com/100-year/>

“Ridiculous”, is well chosen word for...

... what is going on in the Canadian telecommunications fields of battle. You may agree, after reading this recent **Teksavvy Buzz** newsletter.

<https://emails.teksavvy.com/teksavvy-buzz-newsletter-august-31-2023-edition>

Schools in Ontario Re-Starting

The first weeks of school can be trying, for parents and students, especially for those depending on bussing, or wanting a preferred class or school. (*Classes frequently re-formulate up to three weeks into the term.*) More strikes, in October, are a distinct possibility. Of greater concern, at higher levels of education, is “cheating”, mainly through plagiarism, now aided by AI. [*Cheating is more prevalent due to advanced large language machine learning.*] Teachers are not without online resources to root out such cheating. Try typing “**free plagiarism checkers**” in the search field of a browser. A long list of services will appear; some are totally free. One source writes, “*If you want a tool for simple plagiarism checking of the website content, the best free tools include Dupli Checker, SmallSEOTools, and Plagiarisma. For students and teachers, the best plagiarism checking tools include Grammarly, EduBirdie, and Quetext. Aug 7, 2023.*” (*These appear to be checkers for online content, rather than for checking student submitted files.*)

Gravity Batteries

Gravity has been making much of our electricity for over 100 years—from water flowing from reservoirs and dammed up rivers. Water can supply continuous hydro power—as long as the water supply lasts. Fortunately, nature supplies lots of fresh water from rain clouds. However, climate change, and an increasing power demand, has placed stress on the grid. Wind and solar can help, but they are unreliable. Tidal hydro works quite well for smaller coastal needs. However, large cities are looking for a reprieve from brownouts. The solution may be “**gravity batteries**”. Any tall structure, or deep hole in the ground, can be employed, as long as the descending weight is very heavy and can fall far enough to do the work of spinning a large generator. Since water—the current gravity generator—is really not that heavy by volume, other materials (including heavy waste material) can be solidified into heavy brick-like pendula, in place of water. They can be made from incinerator waste, mine tailing, and the like. Using waste material makes it more economical. So is building a tall structure, specifically for these heavy materials, in the location where such waste is found, rather than trying to move heavy material to an existing tall structure inside a city. Texas and China are trying it out, with two over 400 feet tall buildings, equipped with mechanisms to lift and drop these weights in a controlled manner, generating 4 to 8 hours (sometimes more hours) of steady power during high demand periods. Of course, these weights must be elevated again, with electricity, after descending. This happens during periods of low demand. Builders of these system claim 80% efficiency (energy recovery) which is better than hydro’s efficiency when using pumps to replenish a reservoir.

<https://wonderfulengineering.com/this-company-is-creating-two-massive-gravity-batteries-in-the-u-s-and-china/>

Seagate Ultra Touch HDD 2023

Seagate is well-known for its many back-up portable drives, along with a lot of included trial software and services (that users may, or may not, want). Finally, this model has the USB-C port (upgraded from USB3.0) and it is made with about one third recyclable materials. Moreover, the cable is long enough to safely set down the drive while moving the laptop. Security, for some portable drives, is a major concern, hence the option to password protect this drive with AES-256 hardware encryption. Capacities ranges from 2TB, to 4TB or 5TB. The larger capacity drives are thicker, which may mean ‘platters’, or more ‘platters’ that could be spinning inside. Canadian retailers may be slow to introduce this particular portable drive, although plenty of USB 3.0 and 3.2 Seagate portable drives are on shelves.

<https://www.seagate.com/ca/en/support/external-hard-drives/portable-hard-drives/ultra-touch-hdd-2023/>



Microsoft Edge – features deprecation

By late September, Edge users may find these five features have been deprecated: -

“**Deprecation of features.** To improve end user experience and simplify the More tools menu, the following features are being deprecated: Math Solver, Picture Dictionary, Citations, Grammar Tools, and Kids Mode.”

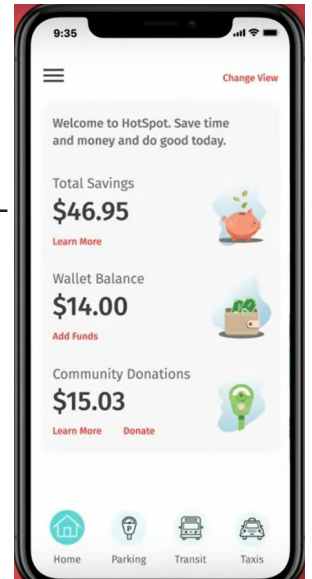
<https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/deployedge/microsoft-edge-relnote-beta-channel>

Parking App for Clarington

Downtown parking zones in Bowmanville will offer another option for payment – other than coin slots and windshield receipts. The [HotSpot parking app](#) (on phones) seems to work somewhat like **Presto**, in that your phone wallet holds a credit, which gradually diminishes with each parking charge event. The advantage—for regular ‘parkers’... unused time will be credited back to the owner. Alerts will be sent to the phone before time runs out, allowing for remote top-ups, to a maximum of three hours in some locations. **[The developer of this app has included icons for municipal Taxi and Transit services, which may be activated at some future time.]**

Enforcement officers can identify and validate your car by way of the vehicle’s licence plate ID and parking spot number, which you enter yourself, each time you take a spot – like self-checkouts.

<https://www.clarington.net/en/news/clarington-announces-new-digital-option-to-pay-for-parking-in-downtown-bowmanville.aspx>



Google adds watermarks to AI images

Imagen is a Google service to create realistic images from text prompt, by way of AI. **SynthID** is a technology that intercedes during the creation process, to add inconspicuous pixels to the image – a watermark, in other words. SynthID can also predict, with a level of certainty, if an existing image was created by AI. The article delves further into provenance tracking of an image.

<https://www.cnn.com/2023/08/30/tech/google-ai-images-watermark/>

Google WeatherBench 2

Google Research is aiding in the next generation of computer aided weather forecasting. The aim is not only to extend accurate forecasting to more days in the future, but to improve granularity to smaller patches of land area. I can only assume that a huge variable—Climate Change—can be factored into **WeatherBench 2**.

<https://blog.research.google/2023/08/weatherbench-2-benchmark-for-next.html>

Microsoft Genomic Research

A cursory reading of the article indicates that MS is working on improvement to three areas of genomic computing. Since so much computing power is needed to sequence the human genome, and so much storage is needed for holding such data, one such effort is in Genomic Research and Development. In conjunction with R&D, the team wants of upscale the process as to speed and number of simultaneous processes, along with using Azure to facilitate and accompany any off-site installations.

[Microsoft Genomics - Microsoft Research](#)

DPCUC President's Notes

by Peter Camilleri

One of the most important things we do in the club executives is plan out the speakers and topics for each meeting. We spend a lot of time tracking down leads and ideas. What we need to do more of however, is listening to the topics that you want to know more about.

If there is something you would like to see discussed at a meeting, send an email to a member of the executive or even just raise your hand during the open discussion part of the meeting and ask away. Even if we can't answer your question on the spot, we can do the leg work and come up with an answer or even a whole meeting topic.

In other news, I've never been one for Apple Computer Corp stuff. For one thing they generally command a 100% price for reasons like being impossible to update or repair or maybe it's the snazzy logo? In one interesting case, the cost of an iPhone 14 is so high that a woman in China chewed through the steel security cable to get herself a phone she could afford. Half an hour later she was arrested by the authorities and now is in jail with no phone and probably needs some serious dental work.

Seriously, the lengths some people go to for mere material gains.

Also, do you use Windows WordPad? Does anyone use it, and will anyone miss it? WordPad, the light weight text editing app that has been a Windows staple for 28 years, has been deprecated by Microsoft.

In a bulletin about deprecated features, published recently, Microsoft says that WordPad will no longer receive updates and will be unavailable in future versions of Windows. They go on to recommend either Microsoft Word or Windows Notepad instead.

Personally, I'd recommend LibreOffice Writer as a much better, free option!

Finally, again, please pray for peace in Ukraine.

Peter Camilleri, President DPCUC.

Linux in the News

by Alex Morrison



[How to Install Kali Linux on Windows 11 Using WSL](#)

In this post, we will show you how to install Kali Linux on Windows 11 using the Windows Subsystem for Linux (WSL).

[How to Find Linux Screen Resolution From Command Line](#)

Learn how to find your Linux desktop screen resolution from the command line using xrandr and xdpinfo commands.

[Rocky Linux Confirmed to Remain 1:1 Compatible With RHEL](#)

In a statement about OpenELA, Rocky Linux confirmed its commitment to remaining a 1:1 fully compatible drop-in replacement to RHEL.

[Firefox 118 Enters Beta Testing with the Built-In Translation Feature for Websites](#) **[0 Comments](#)**

Firefox 118 web browser is now available for public beta testing with a built-in and automatic translation feature for websites, as well as other changes.

[Mozilla Firefox 117 Is Now Available for Download, Here's What's New](#) **[0 Comments](#)**

Mozilla Firefox 117 web browser is now available for download with various improvements, bug and security fixes, and other changes.

[UbuntuDDE 23.04 Now Available](#) **28.08.2023**

A new version of the UbuntuDDE remix has finally arrived with all the updates from the Deepin desktop and everything that comes with the Ubuntu 23.04 base.

[Desktop](#) , **[Snap](#)** , **[Ubuntu](#)**

[Star Labs Reveals a New Surface-Like Linux Tablet](#) **23.08.2023**

If you've ever wanted a tablet that rivals the MS Surface, you're in luck as Star Labs has created such a device.

[Kubuntu](#) , **[Linux](#)** , **[Linux mint](#)** , **[Tablet](#)** , **[Ubuntu](#)** , **[Xubuntu](#)**

Linux – TVTuners

By Alex Morrison

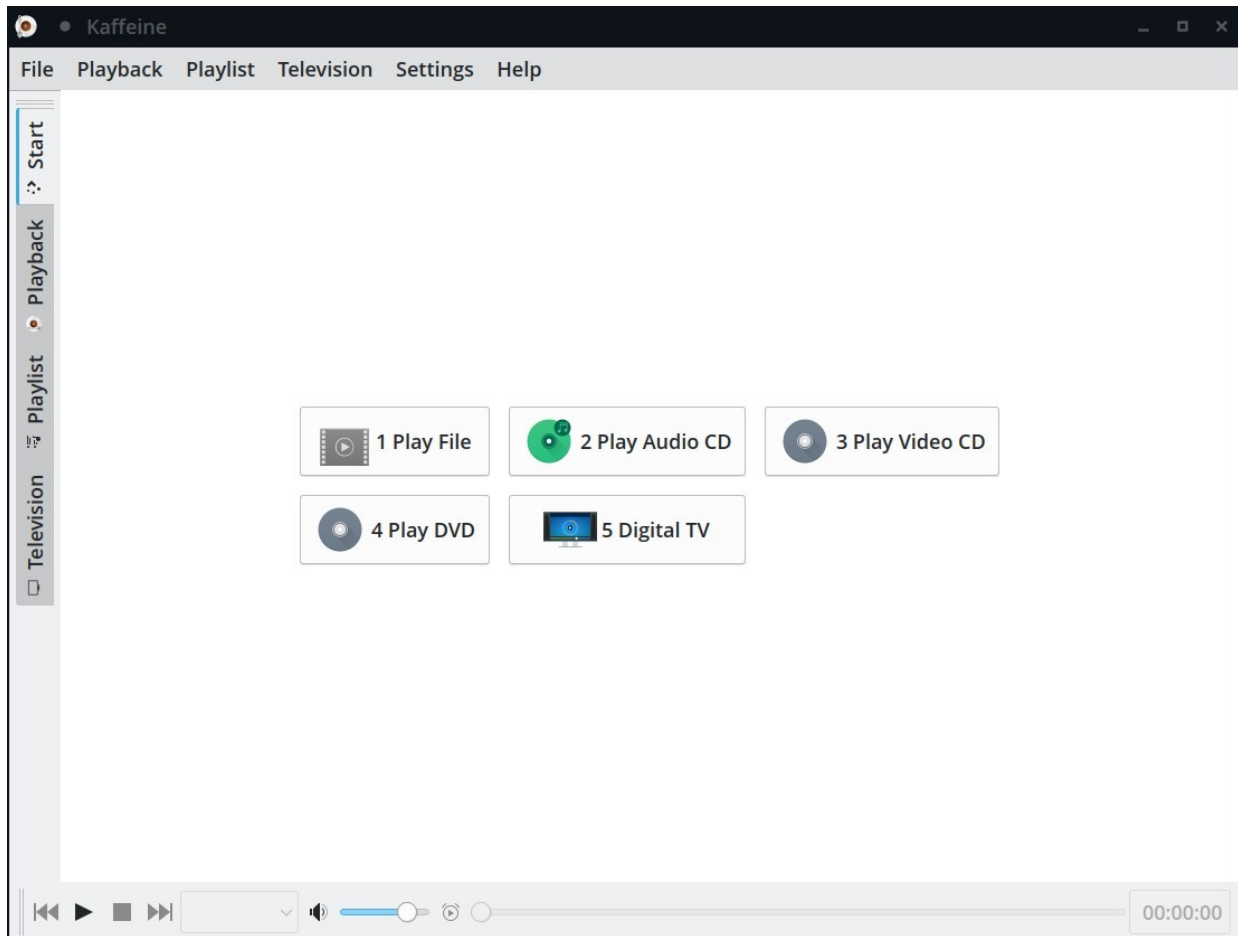


TvTuners are available in many formats. They are standalone devices like Tablo and HDHomerun. They are also devices from many companies that connect by USB.

The one common element is – you need an antenna. The antenna could be indoor or outdoor depending upon your needs.

Kaffeine is a video playing program that has the ability to tune and record TV channels. So if you use a USB connection for TV then Kaffeine will do everything for you.

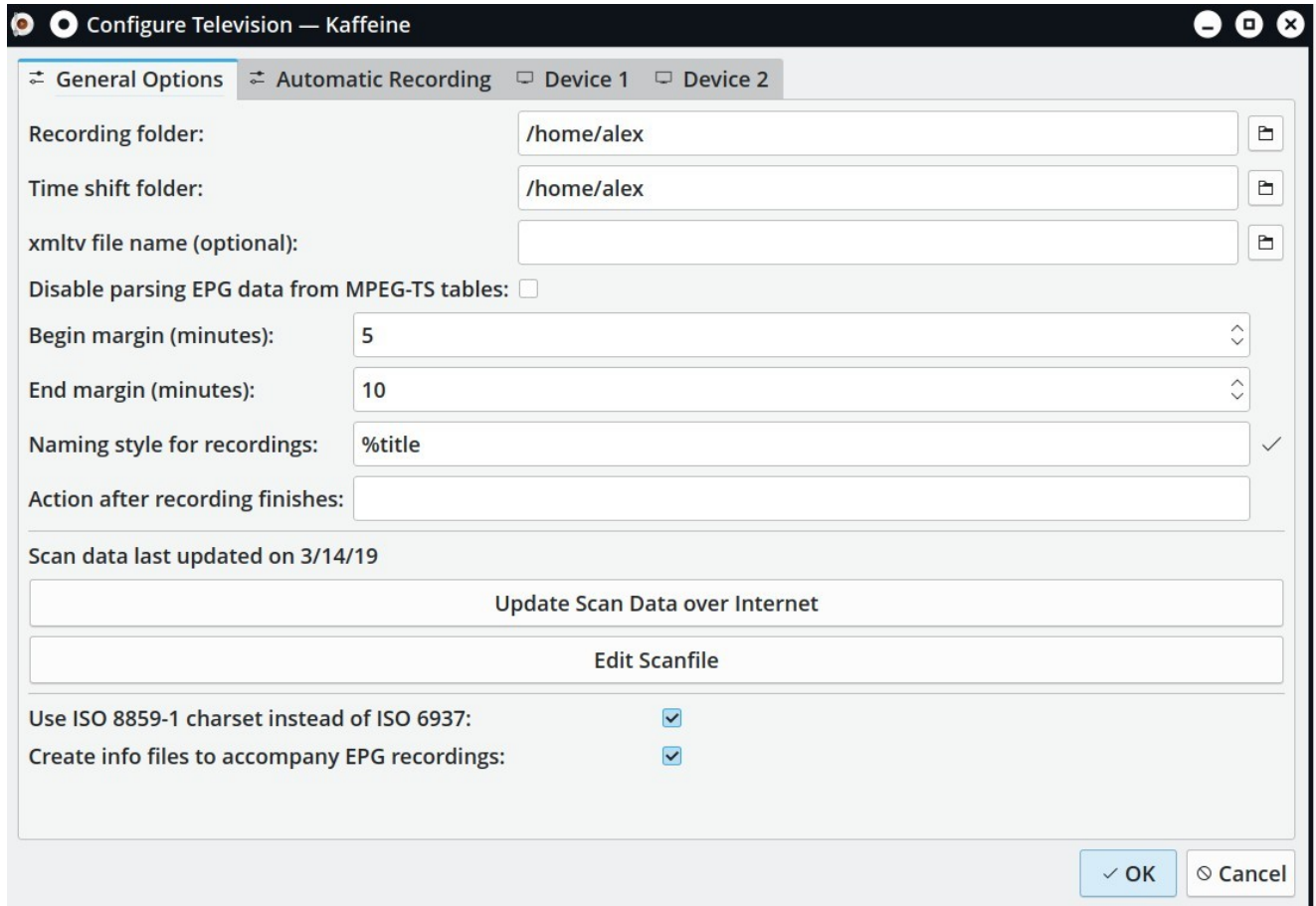
Here is Kaffeine....



The screen shows Kaffeine can play a file, or Audio CD, or Video CD, or DVD and TV.

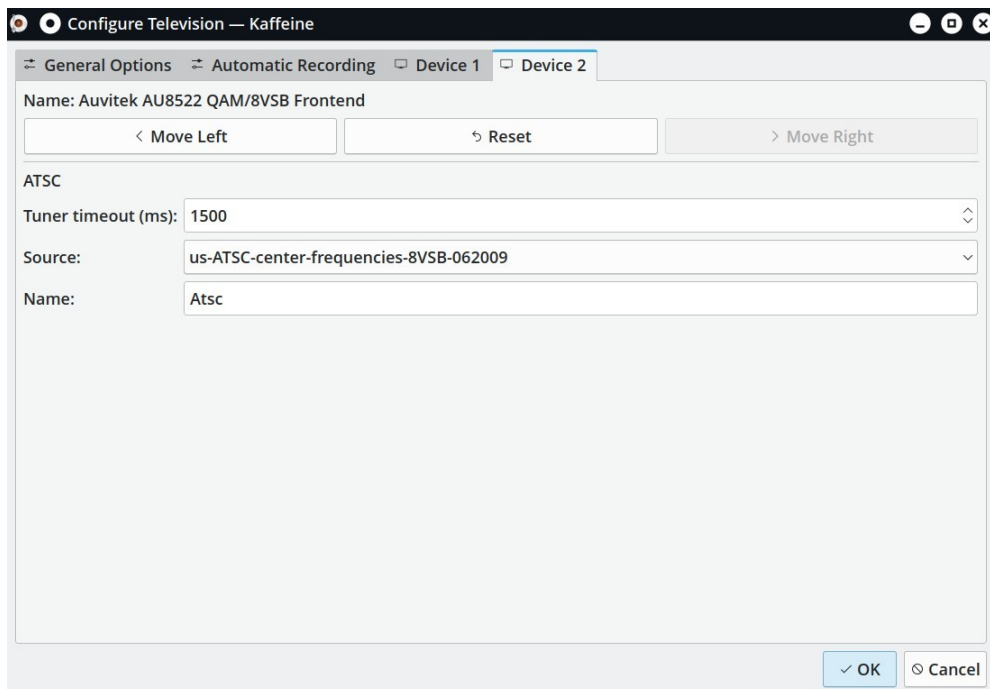
To play TV you first need to add the device to Kaffeine and scan for channels.

Start by selecting Television and in that menu select Configure Television.

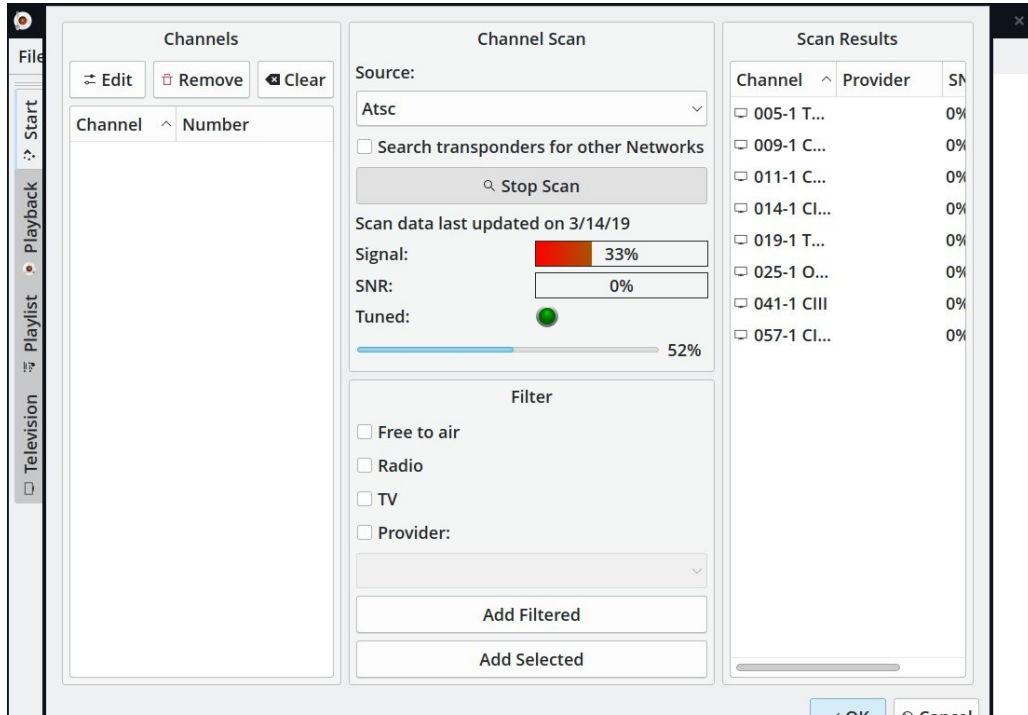


In this menu you will be able to adjust settings of your recording folder and start and end times. If your device is recognized it will be listed at the top as Device 1 or 2 [if you have 2] or more.

I first have to click the device I will be using and select the Source in the drop down menu. ATSC US or Can work equally well.

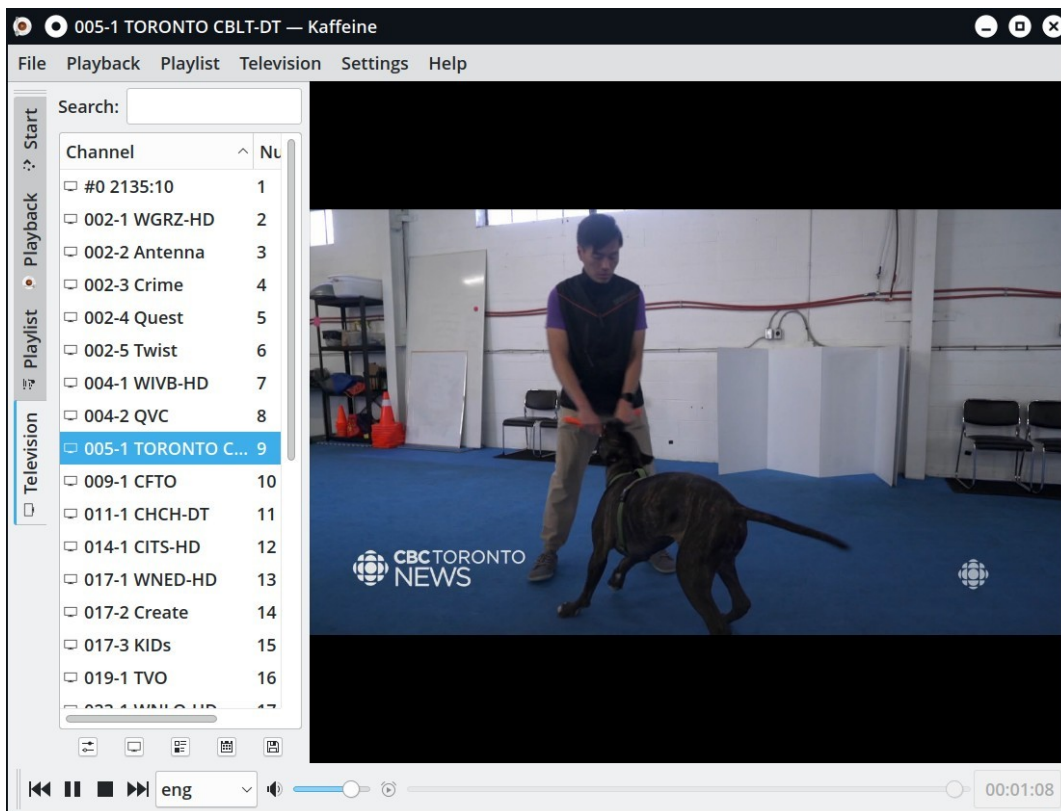


Device 2 is my built in TV Tuner and Device 1 is my plugged in Hauppauge USB Tuner.
I am scanning the USB.



The channels appear on the right side as I scan and after scanning I highlight all and press the button “Add Selected” to place all channels scanned on my menu at the left.

My scan with the USB found 30 channels [The internal tuner finds a few more.



When watching a show – under the Television menu at the top you can pick instant record or schedule recordings on any channel.

There are a large number of TV Tuner devices that will plug in to your TV and and can do a few extra things that a USB tuner cannot do.

I have a Tablo device that is capable of streaming my TV signal throughout the home to any TV or PC through the network wired or wireless.

Another excellent device with similar feature is the HDHomeRun.

A common future problem is the slow conversion to ATSC3 as older devices will not be able to decode the signal.

ATSC1 will still be available for all channels for another 5 years.

The HDHomeRun has 4 tuners – 2 of which can play and record ATSC3. Tablo is still working on their ATSC3 devices and are not selling yet to Canada.

The least expensive tuner capable of watching ATSC3 is the ADTH tuner [less than \$100]. ADTH however does not have any extra features – it just connects to your TV and plays everything.

Free Linux Wallpaper



Sudoku

September 2023

by Alex Morrison



EASY

2	7		6					1
						7	5	
4			1	2				
			3					
3	6	1						
		7			8			4
6	5				4	1		
			5	6		9		
1								3

Sudoku

The game boards on this page were produced using **Sudokuki** on PCLinuxOS 64 Bit running KDE Plasma.

The objective is to fill in the missing numbers ensuring that every 3 X 3 grid has the numbers 1 through 9 with no repeats and every full column or row has the numbers 1 through 9 again with no repeats.

If you have troubles solving the puzzles send an email to me and I will send you the solution.

Have fun! Alex

MED

3					5	6		
		4		7		8		
	8	7						3
					2			
			5		4			
1		6	8			7		
2			4		3			9
7			1			2		
	9							8

HARD

			2		1			
4			6	3	8			
	5							
6						1		4
	8				9		7	
		7					2	
					7	4		
		3				9		6
4			8	9				5

If you don't Like Sudoku puzzles – try these pages

<https://www.boatloadpuzzles.com/playcrossword>

<http://www.freegames.net/puzzle-games.html>

<https://www.cryptograms.org/play.php>

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS SIG's

Special Interest Groups are for members only.

SIG's are really free monthly seminars with question and answer sessions following the presentation(s)

Members of SIG's enjoy a feeling of community and share common goals and interests.

Most SIG's are informal and members who attend them set the agenda for the meeting based on their own needs.

New ideas for SIG groups are welcome.

Special Interest Groups

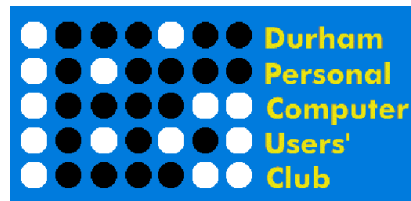
Durham Linux User Group

Coordinator: Ed Goudge

Our Linux group meet on the first Thursday of every month.

All meetings are currently held using Zoom.

We hope some day to meet again in person.



DPCUC EXECUTIVE

2022-2023

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HOME PAGE --- <http://www.durhampc-usersclub.on.ca/>

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The PC Monitor cannot be responsible for errors or inaccuracies in the content, although efforts will be made to publish information accurately.